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SUBJECT: URUGUAYAN PRESIDENT VAZQUEZ MEETS WITH FIDEL CASTRO

REF: A. HAVANA 462

[1](#)B. HAVANA 464

Classified By: COM Michael E. Parmly for reasons 1.4 (d) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) According to Cuban press reports, visiting Uruguayan President Tabare Vazquez met for more than 2 hours with Fidel Castro on June 19. Unlike the visit of Venezuelan President Chavez earlier in the week (reftels), there were no visual images of the meeting made public.

[1](#)2. (U) Meeting with the press after his encounter with Fidel, Vazquez described the former Cuban president "...in good spirits, intellectually very well and trying to overcome--as he is doing--a very difficult situation from a personal standpoint." Vazquez said the two discussed a variety of issues including: the high cost of oil and alternative energy sources, and the high cost of food.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: Vazquez is the first in the stream of foreign leaders to meet with Fidel other than Chavez and Bolivian President Evo Morales since Brazilian President "Lula" da Silva in January 2008. The fact that his long-planned visit coincided with an unexpected visit by Hugo Chavez--and one that included a heavily publicized meeting with Fidel--probably won him the coveted prize of a personal meeting with the iconic leader. Coming from a trained physician, Vazquez' comments regarding Fidel's health may carry much more weight than Chavez' analysis that Fidel is "alive and kicking" delivered June 17.

PARMLY